

My name is Matthew B. Heavrin. My wife's name is Barbara Jean Heavrin. We live in Redlands, California. We have four children, Matthew, our oldest is at the Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD. He will graduate this May. Our daughter Hannah Leah served in the U.S. Army as a quartermaster in Iraqi freedom until she was killed September 4, 2006. Our third child Philip, serves in the United States Marine Corp and is currently based in Camp Pendelton, California. Our fourth child is Ruth Ann, she will be graduating from Redlands High School this June and will be attending Cal State San Bernardino this fall. I, myself am a U.S. Navy veteran. I work as a Power Plant Operator for Los Angeles County. My wife is a Registered Nurse and is employed by The San Bernardino County Sheriffs. As you can see, our family has served and will continue to serve this country and mankind. My wife and I have instilled in each of our children the importance of love for country and to make this world a better place through service and responsible living.

Our daughter Hannah had aspirations to go to college after high school. We had some money saved up but not nearly enough to afford the full tuition. Our goal was for Hannah to go out and look for grants, scholarships and other financial aids that would fill the gap. She came home one afternoon with an Army recruiter. We listened to him and asked Hannah if this is what she truly wanted. She said yes and off to the army she went. After her basic training she went to AIT (individual training) and met a young man there who was also in the army. The two began a relationship and had planned on marriage and Hannah became pregnant. Their relationship failed and Hannah returned home after being discharged from the army. Shortly after giving birth to her son Todd on November 02, 2004, she returned to the army against our wishes. I personally got on my knees and plead with her not to go back into the army. That she would most certainly end up in Iraq. She said that she was told that the army does not send single mothers on deployment. She did indeed reenlist and went to another army specialized school to become a quartermaster and left Todd in our care. While at quartermaster school she met Chris McKinney, someone she had gone to high school with in Redlands. After Hannah was finished with quartermaster school, she was assigned to Fort Lewis, Washington. I moved all of Hannah and Todd's personal belongings from Redlands to Fort Lewis in July of 2005, and helped her find a townhome in Tacoma, Washington and assisted her in

securing childcare on the base. A few weeks later, she told us that she was assigned to the 542nd Maintenance Co. as a quartermaster. In September I learned that the 542nd would be deployed to Iraq. My heart sank, and I almost knew her fate right then. I flew up to Tacoma to stay with my grandson while Hannah went with her unit for maneuver training in Oregon. While staying in her townhome I couldn't help but notice all of the love letters that Chris McKinney had written to Hannah. They were pasted on the wall like wallpaper. Just before the 542nd Maintenance Co. deployed, Hannah brought Todd and some of his things down to us along with a power of attorney so that we could make decisions for Todd on Hannah's behalf. It was then that I learned that Hannah had gotten married to Chris McKinney. We had not even met Chris at this point and had only a brief description of him. It was late October 2005 and Hannah's unit deployed to FOB Taji, Iraq in the middle of November 2005.

While in Iraq, Hannah would phone home and occasionally write. She would tell us how she was re-assigned from the quartermaster office to security. She spent nearly all of her time up in a guard tower along a perimeter road around FOB Taji. She also sent some photographs to show the desolation where she was posted and the conditions that she served in. What stood out to me was how lonely she was and how much she wanted to get home. She missed her son Todd and her new husband Chris. In May of 2006, she was flown home for two weeks R&R. She was so happy to be home and did not want to go back. Todd recognized her almost immediately. Chris, Hannah and Todd rented a convertible and had a wonderful time as the newly formed family spent their time together. We had talked and even began preliminary plans for Chris and Hannah to have a church wedding and then Chris would adopt Todd. A few days before she was to return to Iraq, Hannah's demeanor changed. She was regretting separating from us and Chris and Todd again. She even asked me if I would break her arm for her so that she wouldn't have to return. Of course I did not and Hannah did return to Iraq. Chris returned to Fort Lewis. Todd stayed with us in Redlands.

On the morning of September 04, 2006, I was at work, when I received a phone call from Barbie. She explained to me that I needed to get home right away. There were two army chaplains at our door.

I cannot describe to you the range of emotions that I personally endured and grieved with Barbie as she went through hers. From the time of the chaplain visit, to planning the funeral, to sorting out Hannah's life and that in relation to Todd's. We have shed buckets of tears, felt guilty, angry inadequate, and generally depressed. Through it all we have endured through our faith, our friends and each other. We have been taking care of our grandson since the day he was born. We videotaped Todd in various stages of his young life so that we could share the moments with Hannah in Iraq. The video CD's were packaged and ready to be mailed out and they would have been if Monday weren't a holiday.

The cause of Hannah's death was under investigation and it was difficult to determine how or why she died. As the investigation progressed, we learned that the circumstances revolving around Hannah's death were criminal in nature. Never before have I felt this way. It is though we were betrayed by the sense of honor and service we adhered by. Our daughter died for one mans selfish satisfaction. As an NCO in the army, he was to be about the business of looking after his subordinates. He did otherwise. We feel cheated. Todd's mother is gone. He was cheated. Hannah's siblings have lost a wonderful friend, confidant, and sister. They were cheated. Chris lost his wife. He was cheated.

It has come to our attention that each soldier had a \$100,000 "death gratuity" and a group life insurance policy for \$400,000. We were not aware of these policies until of recent. We also learned that Chris McKinney received both. I do not know if my daughter so designated Chris or if it was automatically paid out to Chris as the survivor since he is the husband. We believe that the assumption was made that Chris is caring for Hannah's son Todd, which he is not. The burden of raising our grandson has been on us only. We receive support from no one. Nor has Chris McKinney offered any of his \$500,000 to us or to Todd. We are not in the business to take anything that does not belong to us, but to have our daughter taken from us in the manner that she was, and for Todd to grow up without his mother, without her death benefit, is just plain wrong. We believe this is an anomaly that needs to be remedied to benefit the surviving sons and daughters of deceased soldiers, sailors and airmen to assist the grandparents who raise them.